



Children and weapons in Montenegro - A review of data and research



SEESAC

South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse
for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons



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Foreword

This research on the impact of small arms¹ on children and young people in Montenegro was commissioned by the SALW Education (Curriculum) component of the EU Western Balkans SALW Control Support Plan 2006 project implemented by SEESAC. One of the first requirements of any attempt to develop educational responses to social issues is obtaining quality data. In the case of small arms, this means data on; 1) the impact of small arms on children and young people, in terms of statistics on crime (homicides, assaults, armed robbery), where young people may be victims or perpetrators; 2) public health data (accidental deaths and injuries, suicides); 3) information about attitudes and perceptions of small arms on the part of children and their parents and teachers; and 4) broader data on violence in society and its impact on children.

The 2004 SALW Survey of Montenegro, 'A house isn't a home without a gun', indicated that there was little or no data available relating to children and young people. The crime statistics reporting on assaults used the age category 15 - 29, a standard category in such reporting, but one that is not helpful for programming for children, defined as from birth to 18 years of age. The survey showed that people aged 15 - 29 and 30 - 44, mostly males, were the main victims and perpetrators of armed assaults. Meetings held by the SEESAC Education Consultant, with UNICEF and Dr. Anđo Backović confirmed this lack of data on children and small arms, and therefore the impossibility of developing any appropriate educational responses.

The broader context of the impact of small arms on children is violence in society. UNICEF has recently initiated a survey on bullying in schools, as part of the UN Study on Violence against Children that was released by the UN in New York on 11 October 2006. The study in Montenegro found that there was a discrepancy between children's perceptions and experiences of bullying in schools and that of parents and teachers, who did not view it as seriously, and were seen by children as insufficiently responsive to the problem.

The decision to commission two small pieces of research was made in this context of attempts to raise community awareness of the number of weapons in Montenegro, and the need to control civilian access to these weapons, as well as to identify the extent of violence in schools. This report researched the availability of data on the impact of small arms on children and young people. The second piece of research will involve a participatory study of the attitudes and perceptions of children and their parents to weapons in society.

It is hoped that this research, conducted by an experienced clinical psychologist with extensive field experience, including work on the UNICEF 'Schools without Violence' programme, will contribute to raising awareness about a child's right to grow up in safety and security, to attend schools without violence and to live in a community where guns are seen as enablers of security in the hands of the relevant authorities and not as enablers of violence. It is also hoped that other countries in the region will consider initiating such research and developing ongoing mechanisms for gathering data relevant to the safety of children and young people.

Belgrade, 30 September 2006



Adrian Wilkinson
Head SEESAC

¹ SEESAC uses the term SALW (Small Arms and Light Weapons) which is defined as 'all lethal conventional munitions that can be carried by an individual combatant or a light vehicle, that also do not require a substantial logistic and maintenance capability' (RMDS/G 02.10 - Glossary 4th Edition). For the general reader, perhaps an educator or NGO staff involved in policy development on children's issues, the term SALW (Small Arms and Light Weapons) is unnecessarily technical and confusing. Light weapons are not relevant to the issues of children and youth, except in relation to armed conflict and its impact. Many sources referring to children use the term 'small arms, or 'guns', 'weapons', and 'firearms' interchangeably. So for the purposes of this report the term 'small arms' will be used to refer to 'weapons designed for individual use. They include, inter alia, revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns' which is the definition used by the United Nations. In the Education section of the SEESAC web site, the term 'small arms' is used in preference to SALW.



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1 Introduction

After the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia (SFRJ), conflict in neighbouring countries, the large number of displaced persons in Montenegro, and the continuing economic crisis, citizens of Montenegro have been faced with many challenges over the past five years. The impact of this has been greater than in more developed democracies as the former communist ideology ardently supported the illusion of a stable and safe society. During this period of upheaval, all kinds of societal differences (political, religious and national) began to emerge in Montenegrin society. Each of these groups became insecure about their own position and relations in society, both between individuals and different groups, which developed along lines of suspicion and hostility.

As a result Montenegro, experienced a rapid and sudden change of values and identities, which impacted on both the younger and older generations. For the older generations, a familiar value system was lost and as parents they also experienced, to a degree, a loss of control over how they raised their children.¹

Generally speaking, children who were born or grew up during this period were inevitably exposed, directly or indirectly, and mainly through the mass media, to news about war, uncertainty and other negative influences. They were also deprived of their basic needs in terms of security, stability and protection, which impacted on the psychological well being of youth and children. As a result, many became involved in criminal activities. During the first years of the conflict, weapons were 'introduced' into schools and for the first time, conflicts involving weapons were witnessed among young people in Montenegrin schools. The weekly 'Monitor' of 20 March 2000, stated: *... 'police had to intervene in order to stop a fight between 7th grade pupils of Podgorica's elementary schools 'Maksim Gorki' and 'Sutjeska', who were settling scores with baseball bats. Similar clashes had happened before, but mainly in high schools. Many still remember the bomb attack in Podgorica's 'Slobodan Skerovic' High School, the murder in the yard of the Technical School, also in Podgorica, and the murder in front of the high school in Nikšić'.*

1.1 Weapons in Montenegro during the conflict and today

During both the recent conflict and the social-economic crisis in Montenegro, weapons found their way into the country in different ways. According to data published in the SALW Survey of Montenegro (SEESAC, 2004), which involved speaking to 1,200 households throughout Montenegro in November 2003, 26% of Montenegrin households own at least one firearm.² Citizens of Montenegro are the most armed in the region. The impact of this can be seen in the percentage of suicides in Montenegro that involve the use of firearms (the municipality of Bijelo Polje³ has a high number of suicides using weapons), which suggests that the availability of weapons has increased the likelihood that they will be used in suicide attempts.

Researchers working on the SALW Survey of Montenegro concluded that the minimum number of registered weapons in the possession of citizens is 86,000 (+/- 0%), and unregistered weapons 64,500 (+/- 38%), so in total 150,500 (+/- 16%) weapons.⁴ In an attempt to reduce the availability of weapons to citizens, the state, with the support of international organisations, organized the first campaign for the destruction of firearms in Montenegro on 27 May 2003. In the Nikšić Ironworks 5,027 small arms were destroyed, including 1,770 weapons collected from citizens.⁵ In October 2005, the Government of Montenegro adopted the 'Strategy for the Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Montenegro'. To support one of the long-term goals of this strategy, the 'Law on Prevention of Weapons-Bearing in Public Places and Safe Storage and Preservation of

¹ Lj. Krkeljić and N. Pavličić: Study of parents' attitudes towards a parental role - a Survey (Women's Organization of Montenegro), 1997.

² SALW Survey of Montenegro 'A house isn't a home without a gun' (SEESAC, 2004).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.



Weapons' was passed that same year. On 01 June 2006, the total number of registered firearms in Montenegro was 101,900, owned by 71,109 citizens, with the majority owning only one weapon.⁶

1.2 Weapons and tradition in Montenegrin society

According to the SALW Survey of Montenegro, 21.8% of participants believe that tradition is the main reason for owning a weapon, whilst in neighbouring countries this attitude was held by only 1% - 5% of participants. It is well known that Montenegrin tradition positively evaluates weapon ownership. In the past weapons were inherited by male descendants as a special family heirloom, not only symbolising the warrior figure, and courage, but also manhood. A man who did not have a male descendant would leave his weapon(s) to the closest male cousin of the next generation, but not to his own daughter. As well as for fighting, weapons have also traditionally been used during celebrations: at weddings, when male children were born, and for celebrating religious holidays. In the past, especially in the mountain regions where settlements were isolated and remote from one another, many important events in peoples' lives were communicated to other settlements by gunshot.

It is unclear the extent to which these traditional practices or attitudes toward weapons possession exist today and how significant they are to present-day youth in Montenegro: certainly the younger generation know about these traditions and beliefs, but it is not certain whether they hold these attitudes themselves.

⁶ Radovan Ljumović: Campaign for the return of illegal weapons and the prevention of bearing weapons in public places (Weapons as a serious State issue).



2 A child's right to be protected from violence in Montenegro

The issue of violence in general, as well as the issue of violence against children and the violent behaviour of children, is a subject which is treated as a taboo in Montenegro, both generally and within the framework of educational institutions. The protection of abused children in Montenegro's system of child protection between World War II and the break-up of former-Yugoslavia in the early 1990s was organized within different institutions where procedures were isolated and specialised. Communication between institutions was made more difficult by cumbersome administrative procedures slowing down their efficiency. Schools in Montenegro were part of this system. One of the key characteristics of this child protection system was the discrepancy between existing regulations and their effective implementation.

Significant, rapid and intensive changes in schools in Montenegro started during, and continued after, the conflict in the former-Yugoslavia, when schools were faced with population movements (displaced children and teachers), social problems (teachers' strikes which lasted for about a year in 2003), and material difficulties (only a small number of schools were adequately equipped). This significantly increased the risk of violence in schools. As part of its education reform programme, the Ministry of Education and Science, in cooperation with UNICEF, implemented a non-violent communication and creative conflict-resolution programme with the aim of changing traditional attitudes in schools and preventing conflicts and violence. Five years on, the positive effects of this programme have been burdened by social difficulties and an insufficiently strong system to support them. This programme may have been prematurely implemented.

The risk of child abuse in Montenegrin schools is growing and there is a definite need for this problem to be systematically dealt with. Numerous prejudices also have to be dealt with relating to violence, as well as the significant degree of tolerance in Montenegrin society towards violent behaviour. Even today, Montenegro has no legislation that relates exclusively to the prevention of bullying.

2.1 A multi-departmental model of child protection from violence

As part of the partnership established in 2002 between the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare of Montenegro and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), a comprehensive, multi-departmental approach has been developed to protect children's rights and in particular their right to be free from violence. Since 2005, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been the third partner in the process of developing this model. The first Multi-disciplinary Operational Team was established in Nikšić in 2002, and the second in Bijelo Polje in the following year of 2003. In the second half of 2005, an additional five teams were established in Podgorica, Kotor, Berane, Bar and Herceg Novi. Thus, seven out of ten Centres for Social Work in Montenegro have been included in the development of this system of child protection. In the process of establishing the teams, various training sessions were organized for all the professionals involved, and professional support was also provided.

The teams consist of: a social worker; a psychologist and a lawyer (from the Centre for Social Work); a paediatrician; a psychiatrist (from health protection); an inspector for juvenile offences (from the Ministry of Interior); a judge for juvenile offences; a municipal prosecutor; a pedagogue of a school or a kindergarten psychologist; and a representative of the NGO SOS for the protection of women and children victims of violence. These changes in tackling violence against children have also been reflected by changes in regulations. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare intends, by the end of 2007, to establish a Multi-disciplinary Operational Team in the three remaining Centres for Social Work.





3 Bullying

3.1 Participatory research of attitudes toward violence

The research undertaken during July and August 2005 was the first research to have been undertaken to address bullying in schools in Montenegro. The project was carried out with the support of UNICEF, the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Centre for Development of NGOs (CDNGO). The Parents' Association of Montenegro were also involved and found parents to participate in this research. A consultant psychologist developed the research methodology.

The project included researching and analysing attitudes of pupils, teachers and parents towards bullying. The sample included pupils of two elementary schools: 'Štampar Makarije' in Podgorica and 'Mahmut Lekić' in Tuzi (a suburban school). The research included eight focus groups of children in every school, as well as one focus group with teachers and parents.⁷ The main purpose of this research was to analyse bullying using a participatory research methodology. The following results were obtained:

- Of all the participants, children are the most aware of what bullying is (*'Bullying is the psychological and physical harassment of children'*); and
- Children talked mostly about psychological bullying, and less about physical bullying.

Other groups (teachers and parents) placed significantly less emphasis on the problem of bullying:

- The teachers stated: *'Bullying is defined as not allowing children to express themselves, not giving them enough space, not respecting a child's personality, allowing a superficial relation towards work and the creation of conditions where it is normal not to respect the rules of behaviour'*; and
- Parents spoke of there being a variety of causes of violence, but they did not give any examples.

No participants in the three groups (children, parents, teachers) connected weapons with bullying during the discussion and workshop.

3.2 Schools without bullying: towards a safe and stimulating environment for children

The purposes of this project were: to raise awareness on peer bullying in schools; establish a school-wide network of protection against peer bullying; and unite the school and local community in improving and maintaining school activities. One of the first steps in executing this project was the planning and implementation of the peer bullying research in two schools: the 'Štampar Makarije' elementary school in Podgorica and the 'Dušan Korać' elementary school in Bijelo Polje. The research was done using Olweus' questionnaire for researching violence among pupils.⁸ The research involved 1,882 children, ranging from 2nd grade to 8th grade in both of the schools. First grade pupils were not included because of the difficulty they have in expressing themselves precisely in written and oral form. The questionnaire was delivered simultaneously to all children in the school. In the 'Dušan Korać' elementary school in Bijelo Polje, 732 questionnaires were completed on 10 March 2006, and in the 'Štampar Makarije' elementary school in Podgorica 1,150 questionnaires were completed on 17 March 2006.

⁷ 1 focus group (girls, age 8-10); 1 focus group (girls, age 11-13); 1 focus group (boys, age 8-10); 1 focus group (boys, age 11-13); 1 focus group with teachers; and 1 focus group with parents.

⁸ For further information, see: <http://vinst.umdj.edu/VAID/TestReport.asp?Code=ROBVQ>, accessed on 27 September 2006.



3.2.1 Children's experiences

| SCHOOL | EXPERIENCED PEER VIOLENCE |
|--|---------------------------|
| 'Dušan Korać' elementary school ('DK' ES) | 52% |
| 'Štampar Makarije' elementary school ('SM' ES) | 52% |

Table 1: Percentage of children who said that they had experienced peer violence

More than half of the children from both schools had experienced peer violence.

| TYPES OF VIOLATION | 'DK' ES | 'SM' ES |
|--|---------|----------------|
| Name-calling, teasing in an insidious and insulting manner. | I | I ⁹ |
| Name-calling and commenting on the origin of another pupil. Pupils lied and spread false rumours about me and tried to turn other pupils away from me. | II | II |
| Name-calling and commenting on the pupil's origins. | III | III |
| Deliberate negligence and exclusion from his/her circle of friends. | IV | IV |
| They beat me, kicked me, pushed me, threw things at me or locked me in a room. | V | V |

Table 2: Types of abuse according to frequency

This data shows that psychological abuse amongst peers is the most common type of violence, followed by social isolation and physical violence. When pupils gave answers to open-ended questions, the use of weapons in peer conflicts was not mentioned.¹⁰

Children from the 'Dušan Korać' elementary school in Bijelo Polje stated that violence committed by an individual was the most common form of violence in their school, especially perpetrated by boys (47% of pupils stated this), while in the other elementary school 'Štampar Makarije' in Podgorica there was only a slight difference in percentages between violence committed by an individual (30%) perpetrated by boys and group violence (31%) perpetrated by boys.

In both schools, children usually experience peer violence from others of the same age. In the 'Dušan Korać' elementary school in Bijelo Polje, 45% of pupils experienced violence in particular from their peers (45%) and in the 'Štampar Makarije' elementary school in Podgorica 51% stated this to be true.

⁹ Roman numbers define rank of described models of behaviour (models of violence) for both schools.

¹⁰ Open-ended questions such as 'I was abused in a different way ____' and 'I was violent towards another pupil in some other way ____'.



| DURATION OF VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR | 'DK' ES | 'SM' ES |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Two weeks | 58% | 62% |
| Several weeks up to one year | 42% | 38% |

Table 3: Duration of peer bullying

Pupils reported that they experienced peer bullying over differing periods of time, ranging from two weeks to one year.

The same percentages of pupils (45%) in both schools thought that they could participate in acts of violence against pupils that they do not like. And 25% of pupils in both schools showed a willingness to help a classmate who has been a victim of violence. In the 'Dušan Korać' elementary school in Bijelo Polje 44% of pupils said they feared violence from their peers, and 42% stated the same in the 'Štampar Makarije' elementary school in Podgorica.

3.2.2 Children's opinions on violence and adults

| PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS WHO DO NOT SPEAK WITH CHILDREN ABOUT VIOLENCE | 'DK' ES | 'SM' ES |
|--|---------|---------|
| Parents and guardians | 78% | 77% |
| Teachers and instructors | 87% | 84% |

Table 4: Percentage of parents and teachers, according to the children, who do not speak with them about experiences of violence

This data indicates a severe lack of communication between children and adults on peer violence. It is interesting that parents and guardians, as well as teachers, did not accept this data to be true. 47% of pupils in the 'Štampar Makarije' elementary school and 39% in the 'Dušan Korać' elementary school consider teachers willing to prevent violence between pupils in school.

In the 'Dušan Korać' elementary school, 27% of pupils replied to the question about whether parents report bullying to the school. Of these 27%, 12% of children said that their parents report bullying to the school. In the 'Štampar Makarije' elementary school, 41% of pupils replied to this question, and 11% of them said that their parents report bullying to the school. This is the question that the fewest pupils responded to.

3.2.3 Programme to educate teachers on working with children

Within the framework of the pilot project 'Schools without Bullying - Towards a Safe and Stimulating Environment for Children', there are plans for:

- An emergency programme in the case of violence that is based on restitution for violent behaviour; and
- A prevention programme, which is based on the development of communication skills, tolerance, dealing with emotions, and the development of empathy among children.





4 Media research

Given the influence electronic media has on children and youth, the Ministry of Culture and Public Information and the TV station Montena (2005), launched a project entitled 'TV and a child's right to be protected from violence' – a four episode series.¹¹ Another part of this project included monitoring TV programmes on seven TV channels broadcasted in the region of Podgorica: TVCG 1, TVCG 2, TV IN, TV Montena, TV MBC, TV Elmag, and TV Pink. The monitoring was conducted between 05 - 12 September 2005 (a randomly selected period of time) and the programmes were monitored between 07.00 and 23.00 by two observers. This is the period (according to the law) when TV stations should not broadcast programmes that contain violence.

Some of the data from the monitoring is reported below:

SCENES OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AMONG PEOPLE

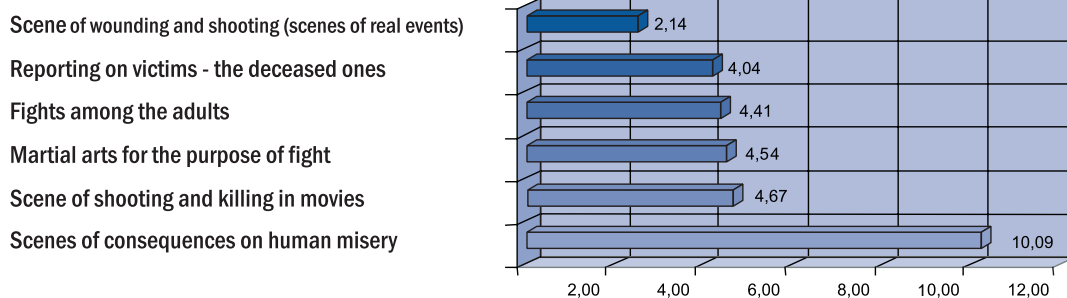


Chart 1: Scenes of physical violence between people that were registered by observers of all TV stations in the seven-day period of monitoring

This chart shows that a number of violent scenes (wounding and shooting) in real life situations, and also a number of scenes of shooting and murder shown in films, were broadcasted during this period.

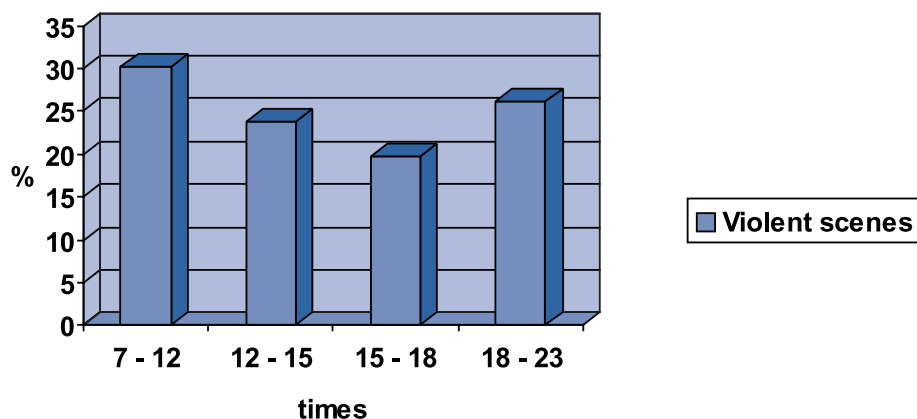


Chart 2: Violent scenes and the programme broadcasting period

These scenes may significantly influence patterns of behaviour adopted by children and youth given the degree of violence and time of broadcasting.

¹¹ Lj. Krkeljić was in charge of this project.





5 Children and weapon use in Montenegro: A review of available data

5.1 Purpose of the research

The purpose of this research is to highlight the problem of weapons use within the context of violent behaviour and accidents among youth and children in Montenegro as well as to propose guidelines for working with children and parents with the aim of preventing the use of weapons in inter-personal conflicts and during traditional ceremonies.

5.2 Source of data

Data was gathered from a range of state institutions: a letter explaining the project's goals and the data required was sent to:

- The Police Administration of Montenegro;
- The State Prosecution Service of Montenegro;¹²
- The High Court in Podgorica;
- The High Court in Bijelo Polje;
- The Penal Correction Institute (ZIKS) in Špuz; and
- The Institute of Education of Youth with Behavioural Disorders in Podgorica.

Since the research showed that the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and Welfare and the Ministry of Education and Science do not hold any relevant databases on children and violence, or any other relevant information, they were not contacted.

In the process of writing this report, the following data was used:

- Records of the Multi-disciplinary Operational Teams on the number of children who are being protected in seven Centres for Social Work in Montenegro (Podgorica, Bijelo Polje, Nikšić, Kotor, Berane, Bar, Herceg Novi);
- A review of small arms articles published in the daily 'Vijesti' in 2003;¹³ and
- MA dissertation by Dr. Lidija Injać, Psychiatrist: 'Suicide: research into motives, causes and consequences', Belgrade, 2005.

¹² After sending the official letter, the Consultant had several meetings with the Assistant State Prosecutor, Radmila Cuković, who stated that their database was in the process of being completed. However, on 27 July 2006, the secretary of the Prosecution Service stated that this institution did not have the requested data, therefore it was necessary to check with the High Courts.

¹³ Aleksandar Pajević – Media Institute of Montenegro.



5.3 Data required

| SOURCE | DATA REQUIRED |
|--|---|
| Police Administration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of minors and criminal offenders who used small arms to commit offences within the last 10 years; Type of criminal offence; Number of minors who have been victims of weapons used in inter-personal conflicts within the last 10 years; Number of suicides (amongst minors) committed with weapons; and Key data on minors (age, gender, domicile), and data on weapons used. |
| Prosecution Service of Montenegro | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of minors who were prosecuted for criminal offences committed using small arms and small calibre weapons, during the last 10 years; and Key data on minors (age, gender, domicile), data on weapons used and type of offence committed. |
| High Courts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of sentences against minors for committing criminal offences using small arms and small calibre weapons, during the last 10 years; and Key data on minors (age, gender, domicile), data on weapons used and type of offence committed. |
| Penal Correction Institute (ZIKS) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of minors who committed criminal offences and who were imprisoned for using small arms and small calibre weapons, during the last 10 years; and Key data on minors (age, gender, domicile), data on weapons used and type of offence committed. |
| Institute of Education of Youth with Behavioural Disorders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of minors who were in this Institute as a result of participating in inter-personal conflicts where small arms and small calibre weapons were used, during the last 10 years; and Key data on minors (age, gender, domicile), data on weapons used and type of offence committed. |

Table 5: Sources and types of data required

As the supervisor of the work of the Multi-disciplinary Operational Teams, the Consultant used the data from monthly and yearly reports that had been sent to UNICEF, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and UNHCR, on the work of the teams since the beginning of their operations. In addition, the Centres for Social Welfare possess all the data that are listed in this research. Since 2002 the Consultant has collected, on an annual basis, general data on the number of children registered as victims of violence and negligence. The children who are 'victims of weapons misuse' are singled out from this general context along with their key data (gender, age, domicile, incident, and type of weapon).

Additionally, articles published in the daily newspaper 'Vijesti' between January and November 2003 that related to the involvement of youth in violent and non-violent criminal offences committed using small arms, were reviewed. Data on suicides was obtained from the MA dissertation undertaken by Dr. Lidija Injać, on 'Suicide: research into the motives, causes and consequences', with the aim of estimating the number of minors who committed suicide in the period 1993 – 2003, noting the number of registered suicides committed with small arms.



6 Review of data obtained ¹⁴

6.1 High Court in Podgorica

Data was obtained from the court office that keeps records on offences and verdicts, but not all data on children and weapons. This court delivered data related to the number of people who had committed a criminal offence of murder or attempted murder using firearms; offences which were legally regulated before this court.

| PERIOD 1996 - 2003 | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | TOTAL |
| Number Sentenced | 2 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 26 |

Table 6: Number of minors sentenced in the High Court in Podgorica for the period 1996 - 2003

| PERIOD 1996 - 2003 | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | TOTAL |
| Firearm | 2 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 25 |
| Bomb | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |

Table 7: Weapons used by juvenile offenders for the period 1996 - 2003

| PERIOD 1996 - 2003 | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | TOTAL |
| Minors from whom a pistol was confiscated | 1 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 10 |

Table 8: Number of minors who had weapons confiscated for the period 1996 - 2003

During the above-mentioned period, 26 minors were sentenced for the misuse of firearms and a total of 10 pistols were confiscated. The sentences for these criminal offences varied from probation, to three years of imprisonment for a criminal offence of attempted murder, and to one sentence of imprisonment of 10 years.

6.2 Penal Correction Institute (ZIKS)

This data was obtained from prison records. In a letter from the Penal Correction Institute (ZIKS) in Spuž near Podgorica, it was stated that there were 37 prisoners who were minors at the time of committing their offences, and who have served their sentences in this prison during the last 10 years. However, having collected the same data from municipalities the number came to 30. Data on the sentences, age and gender of the offenders was

¹⁴ The data obtained from the above-mentioned institutions do not all have the same parameters since none of the institutions has a database with more complete data.



not available. Assuming this is the actual number of prisoners, the percentage of those who used small arms to commit an offence is 48% (where the number of prisoners is 30) or 60% (where the number of prisoners is 37) (see Table 9). Another important piece of data in Table 9 is the high percentage of prisoners from the municipality of Nikšić: 40% (where the number of prisoners is 30) or 50% (where the number of prisoners is 37).



6.3 Data on weapons

| OFFENCE | PLACE OF ORIGIN OF THE MINORS | | | | | | | | | TOTAL |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------|-------------|----------|-----------|
| | PODGORICA | NIKŠIĆ | DANILOVGRAD | PLJEVLJA | BAR | CETINJE | BIJELO POLJE | HERCEG NOVI | BUDVA | |
| Illegal production and trafficking of narcotics | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | 3 |
| Attempted murder | 1 | | 1 | | 2 | 2 | 1 | | | 7 |
| Aggravated theft | 1 | 2 | | | 2 | | | | | 5 |
| Murder | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 3 |
| Aggravated case of banditry | | 7 | | | | | | | | 7 |
| Offence against safety of public traffic | | 3 | | | | | | | 1 | 4 |
| Serious criminal offence against general security | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 |
| TOTAL | 3 | 15 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 30 |

Table 9: Number of minors who committed offences



Table 10 presents the type of weapon that was used by minors at the time of committing the offence. In 50% of cases a cold weapon was used, in 39% of cases firearms, and in 11% of cases a tool.¹⁵

| DATA ON ARMS AND TOOLS | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| OFFENCE | FIREARMS | COLD WEAPON | TOOLS |
| Murder | Pistol 'CZ M57' cal.7,62 | Kitchen knife (19cm long) | |
| Attempted Murder | Pistol 'Bernandeli' cal.7,65 cm | Hunting knife | |
| | Pistol 'Magnum' cal.3,57 | Knife blade (10cm long) | |
| | Pistol 'Bereta' cal 9mm | 'Flick knife' blade (8cm long) | |
| | Pistol 'CZ99' cal.9mm | Knife – razor blade | |
| | Unknown brand of pistol cal. 7,65 | Kitchen knife | |
| | | Knife blade (8cm long) | |
| | | Kitchen knife | |
| Banditry | Unknown brand of pistol and number | Rambo hunting knife | Metal tube (80cm long) |
| Banditry and Robbery | | | Wooden stick (1m long) |

Table 10: Data on weapon used in committing offences

6.4 The Institute of Education of Youth with Behavioural Disorders

In this Institute there is a boy who killed his father with a knife when he was twelve years old - the child had experienced years of molestation at the hands of his father. The data was obtained from Gero Ščekica, Acting Manager of the Institute.

¹⁵ Taken from the Penal Correction Institute (ZIKS).



6.4.1 Multi-disciplinary Operational Teams

| MOT | THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN REPORTED BY YEAR | | | | | TOTAL |
|--------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|------------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 ¹⁶ | |
| Nikšić | 8 | 22 | 37 | 12 | 16 | 95 |
| Bijelo Polje | | 16 | 47 | 9 | 22 | 94 |
| Podgorica | | | | 29 | 35 | 64 |
| Kotor | | | | 1 | 8 | 9 |
| Berane | | | | 5 | 26 | 31 |
| Bar | | | | 6 | 14 | 20 |
| Herceg Novi | | | | 5 | 26 | 31 |
| TOTAL | 8 | 38 | 84 | 67 | 147 | 344 |

Table 11: The number of children reported each year by the Multi-disciplinary Operational Teams (MOT)

The table shows an upward trend of children being reported as victims of abuse and negligence (except in 2005). However, it should be noted that five teams only started work in October of 2005. This is just a general overview of the data. There are considerable differences between municipalities concerning the type of abuse and negligence reported.

Concerning the use of weapons in acts of violence, five cases were reported to the teams:

- Two cases of threatening behaviour using a gun. In both cases the fathers (one a drug addict, one an alcoholic) threatened their wives with a gun in front of their children. In both families there were five children (Bijelo Polje, 2004);
- The team from Podgorica identified a family where a father of four children (a psychiatric patient) used to threaten his wife and children with a gun whenever his condition worsened (2005);
- A fourteen-year-old boy in Nikšić inflicted a bodily injury on his father with a kitchen knife during a family conflict (2005); and
- In Herceg Novi a twelve-year-old boy (a child with special needs) destroyed his uncle's car with explosives (2006).

Out of the five cases, pistols were used in three cases, a knife in one case and an explosive in the other.

6.5 An overview of small arms articles (newspaper 'Vijesti' 2003) ¹⁷

A review of this material shows that from January until November 2003 the daily newspaper 'Vijesti' published 202 articles on inter-personal conflicts between people where weapons were used and which resulted in injury or death. Children or young people were involved in 19 (9%) of reported incidents.

¹⁶ Up until 30 June.

¹⁷ By Aleksandar Pajević, Montenegrin Media Institute.



The following table shows this data for each month.

| MONTH | CHILD VICTIMS | | | CHILD OFFENDERS | | | PLACE | TIME | DATE | INCIDENT | DATA ON WEAPON | TOTAL VICTIMS | TOTAL OFFENDERS |
|----------|--|---|-----|-----------------|---|-----|--------------|------------------|----------|--|--|---------------|-----------------|
| | M | F | AGE | M | F | AGE | | | | | | | |
| January | 1 | | 17 | | | | Podgorica | Approx. 17:00 | 06.01.03 | A stray bullet. | Unknown | 10 | 1 |
| | 1 | | 15 | | | | Kolašin | Approx. 20:00 | 13.01.03 | Two bullets to the back. | Unknown | | |
| | Seven children of unknown sex and age. | | | | | | Budva | Approx. 18:00 | 14.01.03 | The children were playing in the garden when an explosive device went off. No injuries were sustained. | Police did not determine the type of explosive device. | | |
| | | | | 1 | | 15 | Bijelo Polje | Approx. 19:30 | 15.01.03 | A male adult shot a boy in an attempted murder. | No data | | |
| | | | | | 1 | | Nikšić | 23:00 | 26.01.03 | A boy was wounded with a knife in a group fight. | Knife | | |
| February | 1 | | 18 | | | | Podgorica | Approx. 21:00 | NK * | Wounding with a knife in a group fight. | No data | 1 | |
| March | 1 | | 17 | | | | Podgorica | Approx. 21:00 | 09.03.03 | Accidentally wounded; shot in the leg with his rifle. | Improvised rifle | 1 | 1 |
| | | | | | 1 | 17 | Podgorica | NK | | Self-inflicted wounds to the leg and hip; also wounded a woman with two bullets. | Pistol 'CZ' | | |



**Children and weapons in Montenegro -
A review of data and research
(2006-10-20)**

| MONTH | CHILD VICTIMS | | | CHILD OFFENDERS | | | PLACE | TIME | DATE | INCIDENT | DATA ON WEAPON | TOTAL VICTIMS | TOTAL OFFENDERS |
|-------|---------------|---|-------|-----------------|---|-----|---------|---------------|----------|--|--|---------------|-----------------|
| | M | F | AGE | M | F | AGE | | | | | | | |
| April | | | | 1 | | | Nikšić | NK | 26.04.03 | Killed a 24-year-old by stabbing them in the neck. | Knife | 1 | 3 |
| | 1 | | G * | | | | Bar | NK | 26.04.03 | Accidentally shot – in critical condition. | | | |
| | | | | 1 | | | Bar | Approx. 21:00 | 26.04.03 | Robbed a shop at knife-point. | Knife | | |
| | | | | 1 | | | Bar | NK | 26.04.03 | Arrested on suspicion of wounding a young person and an adult male. | Pistol | | |
| May | 1 | | 5 | | | | Plav | Approx. 10:00 | 18.05.03 | Found two bombs and activated one, shattering his arm and severely damaging his head and body. | Two Italian-made bombs (World War II). | 1 | 1 |
| | | | | 1 | | | Cetinje | Approx. 23:00 | 22.05.03 | Stabbed a young adult. | Knife | | |
| June | | | | 1 | | | Bijela | NK | 18.06.03 | Killed a girl by playing with his father's gun. | Pistol | 2 | 1 |
| | | 1 | 16 | | | | Bijela | NK | 18.06.03 | Accidentally killed by a gun. | Pistol | | |
| | 1 | | Minor | | | | Nikšić | 16:30 | 24.06.03 | Accidentally shot on the street when shots were fired between two cars. | | | |

| MONTH | CHILD VICTIMS | | | CHILD OFFENDERS | | | PLACE | TIME | DATE | INCIDENT | DATA ON WEAPON | TOTAL VICTIMS | TOTAL OFFENDERS |
|-----------|---------------|---|-----|-----------------|---|-----|--------------|---------------|-----------|---|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | M | F | AGE | M | F | AGE | | | | | | | |
| August | | 1 | 17 | | | | Bar | 04:00 | 01.08.03 | A policeman visited his colleague's house and shots were fired. One girl was fatally injured. | | 1 | 1 |
| | | | | | 1 | 15 | Nikšić | NK | 16.08.06 | Killed a Chinese citizen with a knife. | Flick knife | | |
| September | | 1 | 9 | | | | Ulcinj | Approx. 12:00 | 02.09.03 | Hit by a stray bullet on the beach. | | 1 | 1 |
| | | | | 1 | | 17 | Bijelo Polje | Approx. 16:30 | 16.10.03 | Fatally wounded a young adult (23) with a knife - he died 2 days later. | Knife | | |
| October | | | | 1 | | 17 | Podgorica | Approx. 22:45 | 11.10.03. | Stole money from an old woman, threatening her with a plastic gun. | | | 4 |
| | | | | 1 | | 16 | | | | | | | |
| | | | | 1 | | 16 | | | | | | | |
| | | | | 1 | | 17 | | | | | | | |
| November | | | | 1 | | 17 | Podgorica | Approx. 22:45 | 27.10.03 | Assault to steal money. | | 1 | |
| TOTAL | 15 | 2 | | 14 | 1 | | | | | | | 17 | 15 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | 32 |

• Not Known

* Recently graduated high school student.

Table 12: Data on child/youth participation in the violent and non-violent use of weapons for January – November 2003¹⁸

¹⁸ During July 2003 none of the published articles had any references to children.



7 Summary

From the articles published during 2003 in the daily newspaper 'Vijesti', 32 children participated in incidents involving the violent and non-violent use of a weapon. 91% of those cases involved male children. The preceding table shows that 17 (53%) of children were reported as victims of weapons misuse, and a slightly lower number of 15 (47%) were offenders. Young people aged 15 to 18 are the age group most often involved in the incidents reported (47%), although the percentage of children of unknown age, described in reports as 'minors', is similar to that number – 44%. Only 9% of children where their age is known, were younger than 15 years of age.

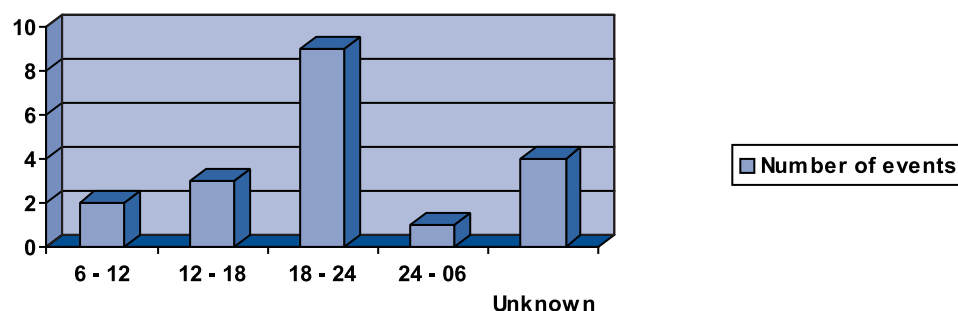


Chart 3: Table of incidents in relation to time of day

The period between 18.00 and midnight was the highest risk period for incidents involving young people and weapons, and violence involving weapons more generally.

| PLACE | TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| Podgorica | 9 |
| Budva | 7 |
| Nikšić | 4 |
| Bar | 4 |
| Bijela | 2 |
| Bijelo Polje | 3 |
| Plav | 1 |
| Kolašin | 1 |
| Cetinje | 1 |
| TOTAL | 32 |

Table 13: Geographical distribution of incidents



Incidents involving weapons and children occurred in all parts of Montenegro but more incidents occurred in the capital city of Podgorica.

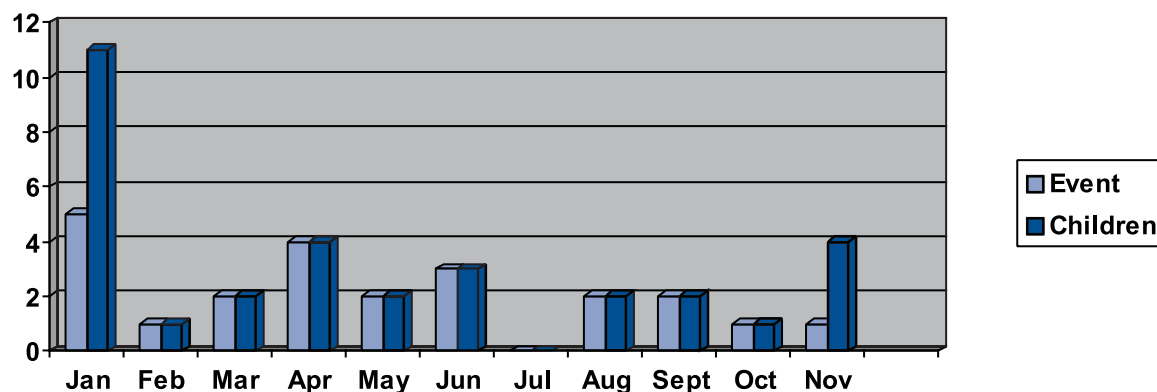


Chart 4: Frequency of incidents and children as participants in 2003

For the year 2003, more incidents involving children and weapons occurred in January. It is not clear why.

| NON-VIOLENT INCIDENTS | # | % | VIOLENT USE OF WEAPON | # | % | UNKNOWN | |
|--|----------|-----------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| | | | | | | # | % |
| Stray bullets | 5 | 16 | Conflict between adult and child | 4 | 12 | | |
| Non-violent injuries using a weapon in games | 3 | 9 | Group fights amongst young people | 4 | 12 | | |
| Non-violent incidents | 1 | 3 | Conflict between two young people | 1 | 3 | | |
| | | | Robbery | 6 | 19 | | |
| | | | Activation of explosive | 7 | 22 | | |
| TOTAL | 9 | 28 | TOTAL | 22 | 69 | 1 | 3 |

N = 32

Table 14: Type of violent and non-violent use of weapons

According to this provisional classification of incidents the majority involved the violent use of a weapon (69%). As for accidents, they mostly involved children wounded by stray bullets (16%). In the case of the violent use of weapons, except for the activation of explosives where children are not injured, the most severe criminal offences are between adults and young people, and among young people, almost in equal proportions.



7.1 The type of weapon

In this overview of newspaper articles, data on weapons is usually not included, but in some cases the weapon was named: a hunting knife; an improvised rifle; a pistol ('CZ' brand); a knife (three times); two Italian-made bombs from World War II; and a flick knife.

| TYPE OF WEAPON | # | % |
|------------------|----------|------------|
| Knife | 5 | 56 |
| Bomb | 2 | 22 |
| Pistol | 1 | 11 |
| Improvised rifle | 1 | 11 |
| TOTAL | 9 | 100 |

Table 15: How often each weapon type was used

The most frequently used weapon was a knife, but since most reports did not include the type of weapon, it is difficult to draw conclusions from this data.

7.2 Research on suicide¹⁹

Dr. Lidija Injać, a psychiatrist, conducted research into suicides in Montenegro. Data on suicides in Montenegro was gathered for the period 1993 – 2003. The average annual number of suicides was 153 and the average annual rate of suicides was 23.61 per 100,000 people. The most common method of suicide involved weapons (in 44% of cases), 7% of all suicides during the 10-year period studied were young people aged 10 to 19, but no data was reported on how young people committed suicide.

7.3 Police administration²⁰

Data for 01 January – 30 June 2006 was obtained from the police administration. The data refers to:

- Juvenile crime;
- Confiscation of weapons from citizens;
- Suicides in Montenegro in the period 01 January - 30 June 2006; and
- Report from the Supreme State Prosecutor of Montenegro on trends in juvenile crime for the period 2000 - 2005.

¹⁹ 'Suicide: research into the motives, causes and consequences', MA dissertation by Dr Lidija Injać, Psychiatrist.

²⁰ Data from Mr. Radovana Ljumovića at a meeting on 08 August 2006. This is the only data that the police administration has, relating to criminal offences committed by minors. The police administration does not record more precise data on use of small arms and light weapons by children and youth.



7.3.1 Minors as criminal offenders

Between 01 January and 30 June 2006 there were 178 minors who were offenders, committing a variety of offences. Older minors (aged 16-18) committed 109 offences, younger minors (aged 14-16) 57 offences and child minors (below 12) 14 offences. Minors were injured in 247 criminal cases and there were 66 charges for offences against the public order by juveniles, which amounted to 5% of the total number of such offences.

7.3.2 Weapons repossession 01 January - 20 June 2006

Between 01 January and 30 June 2006 the police repossessed 233 firearms from citizens, 19 detonators and 1,237 bullets of different calibres. Out of the total number of repossessed weapons, 106 were taken from criminal offenders, 110 were seized in accordance with the *Law on Weapons*, and 17 firearms were taken from offenders charged with a breach of the public order. 89 of the firearms that were seized were illegally owned by citizens.

7.3.3 Suicides in Montenegro 01 January - 30 June 2006

Of the 89 people who committed suicide between 01 January and 30 June 2006, one was an eleven-year-old child, who jumped off the top of a building. 44.94% of suicides were committed using small arms and although there was no data for the majority of cases on the type of weapon used, but the following weapons were identified: four pistols, one hunting rifle, one rifle, one knife and one bomb.



7.3.4 The Supreme State Prosecutor of Montenegro: trends in juvenile crime 2000 – 2005

| JUVENILE CRIME 2000 - 2005 | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| YEAR | NO. OF JUVENILES |
| 2000 | 715 |
| 2001 | 652 |
| 2002 | 560 |
| 2003 | 579 |
| 2004 | 520 |
| 2005 | 520 |

Table 16: Juvenile crime trends 2000 - 2005

| MUNICIPAL PROSECUTION SERVICE | NO. OF JUVENILES CHARGED |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ulcinj | 28 |
| Bar | 27 |
| Kotor | 62 |
| Herceg Novi | 9 |
| Cetinje | 38 |
| Nikšić | 70 |
| Podgorica | 125 |
| Kolasin | 5 |
| Bijelo Polje | 32 |
| Pljevlja | 17 |
| Berane | 45 |
| Rožana | 20 |
| Plav | 6 |
| High Court Bijelo Polje | 4 |
| High Court Podgorica | 30 |
| TOTAL | 518 |

Table 17: Number of juveniles charged with offences
by the prosecution service

Data from the High Court in Bijelo Polje could not be obtained.²¹

²¹ After visiting the court in July the Consultant was informed by the court secretary Sveto Nišavić that employees were on holiday until 31 July 2006. Several attempts were made to contact the Court during August and finally information was received from the judge in charge, Vidomir Bošković, that the investigative judge for juvenile delinquency was on annual leave until 31 August and that all files were locked until then.





8 Findings

Research in schools

- Children have a very clear understanding of what violence is;
- Parents and teachers do not pay sufficient attention to this problem;
- More than half of the children in the schools examined have experienced peer violence;
- The most frequent kinds of violence are psychological violence, social isolation and physical violence respectively;
- Depending on the environment, violence is usually perpetrated by an individual boy or a group of boys;
- Victims and bullies are usually the same age;
- A significant percentage of children in the schools examined (45%) believe that they would participate in a violent act against a pupil they do not like;
- 25% of pupils would help a victim of violence;
- Parents and children rarely report violence; and
- Pupils think that parents and teachers rarely talk with children about violence.

Media analysis

Based on the monitoring of TV programmes of seven TV channels, which was carried out between 05 and 12 September, 2005, it can be concluded that these programmes are saturated with scenes of violence, scenes in which weapons are used in both real life situations and in films.

High Court in Podgorica

Between 1996 and 2003, 26 youth were convicted for committing criminal offences using firearms with an average of three juveniles convicted a year. During this period 10 guns were confiscated from minors.

Penal Correction Institute (ZIKS)

In the last 10 years, 30 (37%) persons, who were minors when they committed the criminal offence, have been serving their sentences in this Correction Institute and 48% of criminal offences are committed with weapons, which is 60% of all criminal offences. The most commonly used weapons were cold weapons (50%) followed by firearms (39%) and tools (11%) whilst pistols are the most frequently used firearm.

Multi-disciplinary Operational Teams

In the four years since the beginning of the work of the first Multi-disciplinary Operational Team for the protection of children's rights and for their protection from violence, five cases of domestic violence were identified, including threatening with weapons and the actual use of weapons. Again, the pistol is the most frequently used weapon.

Institute of Education of Youth with Behavioural Disorders

One boy is interned at this Institute as a result of committing a murder with a knife as a twelve-year-old.



‘Vijesti’ 2003 – Aleksandar Pajević, Montenegrin Media Institute

- Between January and November 2003, the daily newspaper ‘Vijesti’ published 202 articles that covered inter-personal conflicts involving weapons;
- Of the 202 articles, 19 of them (9.47%) covered the participation of children and youth in inter-personal violence and the criminal use of weapons as well as accidents involving weapons – the total number of those children and youth is 32;
- Most of the children and youth are between 14 and 18 years of age, but very often the age is unknown (minor);
- Most of these events occurred between 18:00 and 24:00;
- January was the most critical period during 2003;
- Regarding accidents where children were victims, the most common cases are being shot by stray bullets and injuries resulting from playing with weapons, respectively;
- Concerning the violent use of weapons, there have been bomb detonations, robberies, group fights between youth, and inter-personal conflicts between adults and children/youth. The latter two types of violence are a common occurrence; and
- The most frequently used weapon is a knife (56%), then bombs (22%), and then pistols and improvised rifles (11%) although a great number of articles do not have data on the weapons involved.

MA dissertation by Dr. Lidija Injać, Psychiatrist: ‘Suicide: research into the motives, causes and consequences’

This research paper refers to analyses of suicides in Montenegro for 1993 - 2003. It states that the percentage of suicides among children and youth between 10 and 14 years of age was 7% of the total. The methods used were not recorded.

The Police Administration

The data gathered for the period 01 January - 30 June 2006 covered general crime rates involving children and youth, during which time 178 minors committed various criminal offences. Of these: 1) older minors (16 – 18 year olds) committed 109 offences; 2) younger minors (14 – 16 year olds) committed 57 offences; and 3) children (below 12 years of age) committed 14 offences. Further, between 01 January and 01 June 2006 an eleven-year-old boy committed suicide, whilst amongst the adult population 89 persons committed suicide, out of which 44.94% used small arms and small calibre weapons, during the same period. According to the data from the State Prosecution obtained from the Police Administration for Juvenile Criminality, criminal offences in Montenegro decreased between 2000 and 2005.



9 General conclusions

The data reported in this research comes from different sources and time periods, covers different types of incident and weapon used, and involves different age groups, geographical areas etc, so substantive conclusions are hard to make on the problem of children and weapons in Montenegro.

However, some general conclusions can be drawn from the data gathered on the impact of weapons on children in present-day Montenegro:

- Montenegro is one of the most armed countries in the world. Given the widespread existence of weapons (illegal and legal) in households in Montenegro, weapons are easily available to adults as well as children and youth. This is a risk in terms of children and youth using the weapon(s) available to them but also raises the question of adults themselves misusing the weapon(s) in the home;
- The mere presence of weapons implicitly condones the use of weapons in resolving conflicts, creating a particular model of behaviour for children and youth;
- By using weapons in ceremonies adults offer a pattern of behaviour that may be accepted by children and youth;
- Reporting on the use of weapons in printed and electronic media is very explicit and reinforces a model of behaviour for children and youth to adopt. Since the media is saturated with violence, including violence involving weapons, these models of behaviour that already pervade society are reinforced, and in fact may influence the behaviour of youth even more than traditional attitudes towards weapons;
- Data on the type of criminal offences committed by youth indicates how serious this problem in Montenegro is; and
- The nature of accidents involving children and the presence of weapons in family conflicts all reflect the severity of the problem of weapons possession.





10 Recommendations

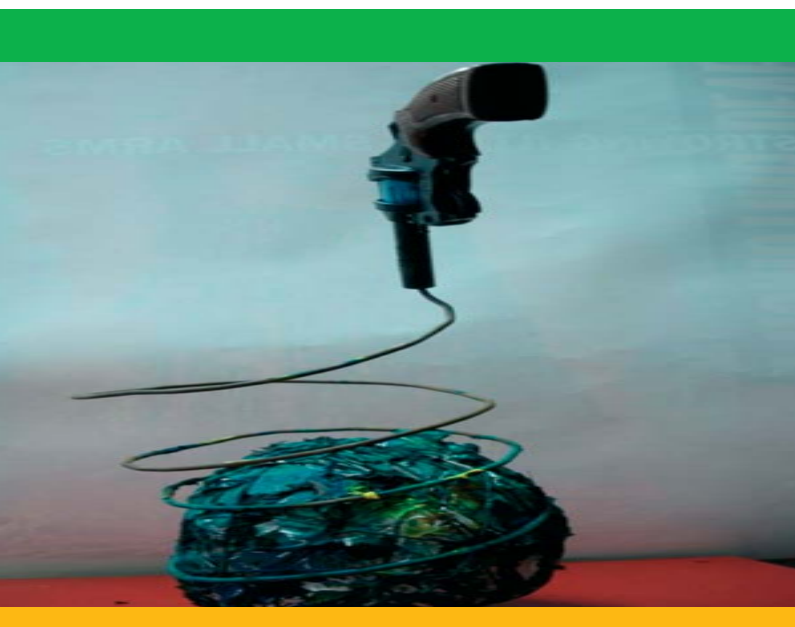
Given the fact that violence perpetrated against children and youth has only recently been recognised in Montenegro and considering that there are now some projects aimed at protecting children from violence, the following recommendations for children and schools can be made:

Prevention programmes for working with children

- Prevention programmes should be based on improving communication skills, learning about emotions, developing empathy, respect and tolerance, and non-violent problem-solving; and
- Prevention programmes could include work on changing existing models of behaviour that are based on the use of weapons. It is important to further explore how the needs for freedom, belonging, power and pleasure can be satisfied within the framework of different models of behaviour.

Prevention programmes aimed at parents

- Taking into account current attitudes and prejudice towards violence, including even tolerance of violence, parents need to be given more information on violence in general, including about the misuse of weapons; and
- In addition, parents should be offered a different set of values, emphasising an understanding of the child's perspective, child development and children's rights.



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